

## References

- Abbot, C. 1798. *Flora Bedfordiensis*. Bedford. Aurelian Society. Rules and regulations for the establishment and continuance of the . . . society. Ms., June 1801 *et seq.* Newington District Library, London.
- Berkenhout, J. 1769. *Outlines of the natural history of Great Britain and Ireland*. 1. London.
- Dale, J. C. 1830. Notice of the capture of *Vanessa Huntera*, for the first time in Britain, with a catalogue of rare insects captured. *Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 3: 332-334.
- Francillon, J. to J. L. Philips, 4th February 1785. Add. Mss. 29533, British Library, London.
- Haworth, A. H. 1802. *Prodromus lepidopterorum Britannicorum*. Holt.
- 1803 [-28]. *Lepidoptera Britannica*. London.
- Ray, J. 1710. *Historia insectorum*. London.
- Rylands, P. 1839. Statement of the claims of *Papilio podalirius* to rank as a British insect. *Naturalist*, 4: 227-229.
- Samouelle, G. 1819. *The entomologist's useful compendium*. London.
- Walker, J. J. 1907. Some notes on the *Lepidoptera* of the "Dale Collection" of British insects, now in the Oxford University Museum. I: Rhopalocera. *Ent. mon. Mag.* 43: 93-101, 130-134.
- Wilkinson, R. S. 1975. The scarce swallow-tail: *Iphiclides podalirius* (L.) in Britain. 1: The evidence before Haworth. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.*, 87: 289-293.

THE BRIMSTONE: GONEPTERYX RHAMNI L. APPARENTLY IMBIBING AT HYDRANGEA FLOWERS. — On September 6th, 1980, I was surprised to see a female brimstone butterfly alight upon a sterile flower of the head of a Hortensis type *Hydrangea* with pale blue flowers, and probe for some time the calyx tube. This behaviour was repeated on several flower heads before the insect moved on to the bright pink flowers provided by a hedge of *Lathyrus latifolius*, the everlasting pea, which over the years has been noted as the most favoured flower attraction for this species here in my garden. Two days later the visits were repeated.

So far as I am aware *Hydrangea* flowers of this type do not produce nectar, neither were the flowers wet, nor host to aphides. Work by D. Ilse quoted in *The Pollination of Flowers* by Proctor and Yeo, 1973, showed that the brimstone's natural flower preference was for those coloured blue, and that approach was visual rather than olfactory.

This explains the visit to the *Hydrangea*, but what is not clear are its lengthy visits with apparent feeding. Regarding colour selectivity, violet and purple are also attractive to the brimstone, according to Ilse, while few visits are made to red, orange and yellow flowers. In my garden another pink flower commonly attracting the brimstone is *Sedum spectabile*, although I associate this more with *Aglais urticae*, the small tortoiseshell, which Ilse finds most attracted by flowers of yellow or blue colouration, and which also use a visual approach — B. K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Bexley, Kent.